

Session Summary
March 26, 2019 Session Meeting

Following are **highlights** of the March 26, 2019 Session Meeting. *For further clarifications and/or questions, please feel free to contact one of the elders listed at the end of this summary.*

Following a delicious dinner provided by our cooking crew, Pastor Ray opened our meeting in prayer.

Devotion and Prayer as a Session

Pastor Ray began the devotion time by reading from Numbers 20:2-5 and 20:8-13. These passages tell of how Moses and Aaron went to the Lord for help when the Israelites needed water, but they did not trust the Lord enough, exploding in anger and striking the rock. The take-aways from this passage are: (1) Leadership is costly; (2) Results are not the only measure of a great leader. Water came from the rock, but it didn't happen in the way God instructed Moses; (3) Pray for our leaders and each other; (4) Leaders are human.

The devotion time closed in a unison prayer.

Strategic Plan Leadership Task Force – Board of Deacons Proposal (First Reading)

Deacons Moderator Cynthia Bridges explained that the deacons are now a group of 23 instead of 36. They have revised some of their duties and are currently leaning toward doing more community outreach. Some of the suggestions from the Deacon Proposal include: (1) Reduce the board from 36 to 24-30 members. This would have the Nominating Committee recruiting eight to ten people every year. (2) Reduce the obligation of a three-year commitment to a two-year commitment. This would allow for multiple consecutive terms. (3) Continue to oversee Fellowship Hour for the time being but expand the servers to include different ministry teams hosting for a period of time. Look into having a hospitality committee taking on the oversight responsibility. (4) Become more actively involved in the city of Evanston as an outreach of health and human services. This would allow for more collaborating with the Mission ministries. (5) Take on the responsibility of reaching out to every member. This could be done in partnership with Session.

A time of discussion and questions followed. The proposal would be taken up again at the next Session meeting. The congregation must approve any changes that require revision to the church's bylaws.

Strategic Plan Leadership Task Force – Session and Board of Trustees Proposal

In the absence of Design Team Leadership Task Force chair Jon Phillips, elder Sonia Bodi reported on the recent governance deliberations. Several former and present elders and trustees have been looking at our present church governance structure. A survey had gone out to six Chicago Presbytery churches of comparable size. All had been using the unicameral governance model (combined Session and Board of Trustees).

After careful deliberations, the task force determined that further consideration of a unicameral governance model should be pursued, and a group of elders and trustees should be designated by Session to look into the advantages and disadvantages of both models (unicameral vs. bicameral). It was pointed out that if this model were to be approved, two sets of bylaws, one for the congregation and one for the society, would have to be developed and approved by the congregation.

The Session appointed a committee of trustees and elders to determine the feasibility of moving to a unicameral governance model. The members of this committee would be Catherine Latturmer, Peter Steffen, Dan Shiau, Matt McLeod, Sonia Bodi, LeRoy Klemm, John Powell, and Deb Cross.

New Mission Statement

Time was devoted to looking at the present mission statement, as well as a revised one, and offering suggestions for further improvement.

After much discussion, it was decided that the following would be the working model and more time would be devoted to hone it at the next meeting (or sooner):

First Presbyterian Church of Evanston exists to know Christ and to grow in Him as we serve and make disciples in Evanston, the Chicago area, and the world.

The tagline would be: Loving Christ, Following Christ, Serving Christ.

Strategic Plan Timeline

The Ministry Architects timeline was reviewed. Although we are somewhat behind in the various tasks, the Design Team has been busy at work. Pastor Ray is in the process of forming a planning team with representatives from worship, evangelism, education, and fellowship that will collaborate and coordinate on how the Simple Church principles are put into action.

Stewardship Summit

A Stewardship Summit will be held on May 17th and 18th. Those invited to attend are the staff directors, all trustees, budget committee members, and stewardship committee members. Elders have the option to attend.

Staff Report

Rev. Amanda Golbek, Director of Youth, reported on behalf of the staff: Lenten service planning is underway, including the Bach St. Matthews Passion Concert on April 13th; the First Friends Ministry under Mission hosted a luncheon and trip to the Botanic Gardens Orchid Show for Syrian Refugees; Youth Sunday went very well; eight young people were confirmed and welcomed into the congregation on March 17th; the youth made gift bags and cards for the confirmands, created a mentor system, and put together a youth celebration; the Youth Council is wrestling with volunteer engagement.

It was noted that the confirmand exam in which the elders attended was really exciting. Pastor Amanda mentioned that confirmation classes would follow an every other year model.

Associate Pastor and Senior Pastor Reports

- Lenten Small groups: One of the groups is made up of young parents. Two couples wish to have their children baptized on the Sunday after Easter (April 28th). The elders approved this request.
- The First Pres. Talent Show on March 16th was a big success.
- The film "In the Shadow of Memory" will be shown in the chapel on April 3rd.
- Singer/songwriter Sandra McCracken will be giving a concert on October 5, 2019.
- The next Membership Class will be held on Saturday, May 4th from 9-2.

The Session then went into executive session for an extended to discuss staffing needs.

Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) (Second Reading)

The EOP is meant to outline responsibilities in the event of an emergency both inside and outside of the building and provide resources. After some clarifications, the plan was approved.

Clerk's Report

- The annual Financial Review of Books for FY2018 and 2017 was approved by the Board of Trustees at their meeting on March 19th and also by Session.
- Additional Great Commission Fund allocations were made to the following organizations: \$10,800 for Mukululi Ncube support and start up ministry of International Fellowship of

Evangelical Students (IFES) in Eswatini (Swaziland); \$9,200 for the Syrian Student Conference to be held in Homs, Syria (where the church is rebuilding).

Joys and Concerns

- Elder Barb Smith reported that seven young men accepted Christ at the Juvenile Jail where she regularly leads Bible study groups.
- The Youth Sunday Service was wonderful!

Laurie Kaeser, Clerk of Session

2019 Session

Ordained Pastors

Rev. Raymond Hylton, *Senior Pastor & Moderator of Session*

Rev. Henry Coates, *Designated Associate Pastor*

Ruling Elders

Laurie Kaeser, *Clerk of Session*

Daniel Allen, *Children's Ministry Council*

Bob Bastian, *The Counseling Center Board*

Sonia Bodi, *Worship Ministry Council, Chicago Presbytery Commissioner*

Bryan Carmody, *Worship Ministry Council*

Dwayne Dobschuetz, *Youth Ministry Council, Stewardship Committee*

Katie Duke, *Pastoral Care Ministry Council*

Susan Hood, *Youth Ministry Council*

Laura Jones, *Pastoral Care Ministry Council*

Kim Klamm, *Personnel Ministry Council, Budget Committee*

Rosemary Mauck, *Evangelism & Membership Development Ministry Council, Nominating Committee*

Matt McLeod, *Adult Discipleship Ministry Council, Nominating Committee*

Hugh Parry, *Personnel Ministry Council*

Dan Shiau, *Adult Discipleship Ministry Council*

Barb Smith, *Evangelism & Membership Development Ministry Council, Chicago Presbytery Commissioner*

Marge Stromberg, *Children's Ministry Council, Chicago Presbytery Commissioner*

Dick Warnecke, *Mission Ministry Council*

Sharyn Wilson Woods, *Mission Ministry Council, Chicago Presbytery Commissioner*